

JOHN MILLINGTON
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RE: The Council on Environmental Quality

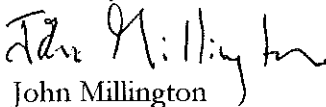
Dear Chairman Slossberg, Chairman Spallone, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Government Administration and Elections:

I write in support of the Council on Environmental Quality, which plays an indispensable role in keeping this state moving toward its vital environmental goals. I serve on the boards of several statewide and local environmental groups, and was honored in the past to chair CEQ. It is extraordinarily effective. Year in and year out, it saves residents much more than they would gain by cutting the \$170,000 CEQ budget line. In fact, I am not sure there would be a savings at all, since DEP would evidently have to pick up CEQ's work. Paid staff would have to be assigned to it.

In my day, CEQ was active in launching state Greenways. Its annual report on the state of our environment is the single document that lets taxpayers know if they are getting their money's worth from our extensive environmental programs. CEQ is the sole recourse in the Executive Branch for citizens with environmental complaints. Many improvements in state environmental laws and practices have emerged from attention to the voices and observations of residents.

I urge the Committee to keep an independent CEQ.

Sincerely,


John Millington